



Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.-19. (canceled)

20. (currently amended) A method for applying a treating agent onto a moving surface, comprising the steps of:

(a) feeding a treating agent into at least one feeding chamber;

(b) forming jets of the treating agent by directing the treating agent through openings in at least one nozzle plate, the entire peripheries of said openings being defined by said at least one nozzle plate; and

(c) directing the jets of the treating agent toward the moving surface such that each of the jets remains separated from the other ones of the jets in the space between the at least one nozzle plate and the moving surface.

21. (previously presented) The method of claim 20, wherein the moving surface is a surface of a web to be treated and said step (c) of directing the jets toward the moving surface comprises directing the jets onto the surface of the web to be treated.

22. (previously presented) The method of claim 20, wherein said moving surface is a surface used to transfer the treating agent to a surface of a web to be treated such that said step (c) of directing the jets toward the moving surface comprises directing the jets to the surface used to transfer the treating agent.

23. (currently amended) The method of claim 20, wherein said step (c) of directing the jets toward the moving surface comprises directing the jets toward a roll nip between a surface of the web to be treated and a surface that contacts the web in the roll nip such

that a portion of the treating agent is applied directly onto the surface of the web to be treated and another portion of the treating agent is applied directly onto the surface that contacts the web in the roll nip.

24. (previously presented) The method of claim 20, further comprising the step of feeding the treating agent through a screen plate before said step of directing the treating agent through openings in at least one nozzle plate.

25. (previously presented) The method of claim 20, further comprising the step of moving the at least one nozzle plate transversely relative to the direction of movement of the moving surface, so that at least a portion of the length of the at least one nozzle plate is moved outside of a width of an area of the moving surface to be treated.

26. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, further comprising the step of moving the at least one nozzle plate transversely relative to the direction of movement of the moving surface, so that at least a portion of the length of the at least one nozzle plate is moved outside of a width of an area of the moving surface to be treated.

27. (previously presented) The method of claim 22, further comprising the step of moving the at least one nozzle plate transversely relative to the direction of movement of the moving surface, so that at least a portion of the length of the at least one nozzle plate is moved outside of a width of an area of the moving surface to be treated.

28. (previously presented) The method of claim 23, further comprising the step of moving the at least one nozzle plate transversely relative to the direction of movement of the moving surface, so that at least a portion of the length of the at least one nozzle plate is moved outside of a width of an area of the moving surface to be treated.

29. (previously presented) The method of claim 24, further comprising the step of moving the at least one nozzle plate transversely relative to the direction of movement of

the moving surface, so that at least a portion of the length of the at least one nozzle plate is moved outside of a width of an area of the moving surface to be treated.

30. (previously presented) The method of claim 20, further comprising the step of cleaning the at least one nozzle plate by blasting steam against the at least one nozzle plate.

31. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, further comprising the step of cleaning the at least one nozzle plate by blasting steam against the at least one nozzle plate.

32. (previously presented) The method of claim 22, further comprising the step of cleaning the at least one nozzle plate by blasting steam against the at least one nozzle plate.

33. (previously presented) The method of claim 23, further comprising the step of cleaning the at least one nozzle plate by blasting steam against the at least one nozzle plate.

34. (previously presented) The method of claim 24, further comprising the step of cleaning the at least one nozzle plate by blasting steam against the at least one nozzle plate.

35. (previously presented) The method of claim 25, further comprising the step of cleaning the at least one nozzle plate by blasting steam against the at least one nozzle plate.

36. (previously presented) The method of claim 20, further comprising the step of cleaning the openings in the at least one nozzle plate by directing a needle-shaped water jet at the openings.

37. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, further comprising the step of cleaning the openings in the at least one nozzle plate by directing a needle-shaped water jet at the openings.

38. (previously presented) The method of claim 22, further comprising the step of cleaning the openings in the at least one nozzle plate by directing a needle-shaped water jet at the openings.

39. (previously presented) The method of claim 23, further comprising the step of cleaning the openings in the at least one nozzle plate by directing a needle-shaped water jet at the openings.

40. (previously presented) The method of claim 24, further comprising the step of cleaning the openings in the at least one nozzle plate by directing a needle-shaped water jet at the openings.

41. (previously presented) The method of claim 25, further comprising the step of cleaning the openings in the at least one nozzle plate by directing a needle-shaped water jet at the openings.

42. (previously presented) The method of claim 20, further comprising the step of cleaning the at least one nozzle plate with ultrasound at the at least one nozzle plate.

43. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, further comprising the step of cleaning the at least one nozzle plate with ultrasound at the at least one nozzle plate.

44. (previously presented) The method of claim 22, further comprising the step of cleaning the at least one nozzle plate with ultrasound at the at least one nozzle plate.

45. (previously presented) The method of claim 23, further comprising the step of cleaning the at least one nozzle plate with ultrasound at the at least one nozzle plate.

46. (previously presented) The method of claim 24, further comprising the step of cleaning the at least one nozzle plate with ultrasound at the at least one nozzle plate.

47. (previously presented) The method of claim 25, further comprising the step of cleaning the at least one nozzle plate with ultrasound at the at least one nozzle plate.

48. (previously presented) The method of claim 20, further comprising the step of controlling the amount of treating agent fed to the moving surface as a function of the volume flow of the treating agent.

49. (previously presented) The method of claim 21, further comprising the step of controlling the amount of treating agent fed to the moving surface as a function of the volume flow of the treating agent.

50. (previously presented) The method of claim 22, further comprising the step of controlling the amount of treating agent fed to the moving surface as a function of the volume flow of the treating agent.

51. (previously presented) The method of claim 23, further comprising the step of controlling the amount of treating agent fed to the moving surface as a function of the volume flow of the treating agent.

52. (previously presented) The method of claim 24, further comprising the step of controlling the amount of treating agent fed to the moving surface as a function of the volume flow of the treating agent.

53. (previously presented) The method of claim 25, further comprising the step of controlling the amount of treating agent fed to the moving surface as a function of the volume flow of the treating agent.

54. (previously presented) The method of claim 30, further comprising the step of controlling the amount of treating agent fed to the moving surface as a function of the volume flow of the treating agent.

55. (previously presented) The method of claim 36, further comprising the step of controlling the amount of treating agent fed to the moving surface as a function of the volume flow of the treating agent.

56. (previously presented) The method of claim 42, further comprising the step of controlling the amount of treating agent fed to the moving surface as a function of the volume flow of the treating agent.

57. (currently amended) An apparatus for spreading a treating agent onto a moving surface, comprising:

at least one feeding chamber for receiving a treating agent; and  
means for directing the treating agent from the feeding chamber onto the moving surface, said means including at least one nozzle plate that at least partly closes said at least one feeding chamber, said at least one nozzle plate including openings, wherein each of said openings comprise a periphery defined entirely by said at least one nozzle plate, and wherein jets of the treating agent are formed by said openings and directed onto the moving surface when the feeding chamber is at least partially filled with pressurised treating agent, each of the jets remaining separated from the other ones of the jets in the space between the at least one nozzle plate and the moving surface.

58. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 57, further comprising a screen plate fitted in said at least one feeding chamber such that the treating agent is screened by said screen plate before being directed through the openings in said at least one nozzle plate.

59. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 57, wherein said at least one nozzle plate has a length that is greater than a width of an area of the moving surface that is to be treated, and further comprising actuators operatively connected to said at least one nozzle plate

for moving said at least one nozzle plate at least partly outside the width of the area of the moving surface that is to be treated.

60. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 58, wherein said at least one nozzle plate has a length that is greater than a width of an area of the moving surface that is to be treated, and further comprising actuators operatively connected to said at least one nozzle plate for moving said at least one nozzle plate at least partly outside the width of the area of the moving surface that is to be treated.

61. (previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 57, further comprising at least one steam nozzle operatively arranged for blowing steam towards said at least one nozzle plate.

62. (previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 58, further comprising at least one steam nozzle operatively arranged for blowing steam towards said at least one nozzle plate.

63. (previously presented) The apparatus according to claim 59, further comprising at least one steam nozzle operatively arranged for blowing steam towards said at least one nozzle plate.

64. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 57, further comprising means for directing at least one needle-shaped water jet at the openings of said at least one nozzle plate.

65. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 58, further comprising means for directing at least one needle-shaped water jet at the openings of said at least one nozzle plate.

66. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 59, further comprising means for directing at least one needle-shaped water jet at the openings of said at least one nozzle plate.

67. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 58, further comprising a cleaning blade plate having an edge and movably fitted in said at least one feeding chamber so that said edge of said blade cleaning plate scrapes one of said screen plate and said nozzle plate during movement thereof.

68.-75. (canceled)

76. (new) The method of claim 20, wherein a thickness of the nozzle plate is in the range of about 0.1 - 0.5 mm.

77. (new) The apparatus of claim 57, wherein a thickness of said nozzle plate is in the range of about 0.1 - 0.5 mm.

78. (new) A method for applying a treating agent onto a moving surface, comprising the steps of:

- (a) feeding a treating agent into at least one feeding chamber;
- (b) forming jets of the treating agent by directing the treating agent through openings in at least one nozzle plate, the entire peripheries of said openings being defined by said at least one nozzle plate;
- (c) directing the jets of the treating agent toward the moving surface; and
- (d) moving the at least one nozzle plate transversely relative to the direction of movement of the moving surface, so that at least a portion of the length of the at least one nozzle plate is moved outside of a width of an area of the moving surface to be treated.

79. (new) The method of claim 78, further comprising the step of cleaning the at least one nozzle plate by blasting steam against the at least one nozzle plate.

80. (new) The method of claim 78, further comprising the step of cleaning the openings in the at least one nozzle plate by directing a needle-shaped water jet at the openings.

81. (new) The method of claim 78, further comprising the step of cleaning the at least one nozzle plate with ultrasound at the at least one nozzle plate.

82. (new) The method of claim 78, further comprising the step of controlling the amount of treating agent fed to the moving surface as a function of the volume flow of the treating agent.

83. (new) An apparatus for spreading a treating agent onto a moving surface, comprising:

at least one feeding chamber for receiving a treating agent;

means for directing the treating agent from the feeding chamber onto the moving surface, said means including at least one nozzle plate that at least partly closes said at least one feeding chamber, said at least one nozzle plate including openings and having a length that is greater than a width of an area of the moving surface that is to be treated, wherein each of said openings comprise a periphery defined entirely by said at least one nozzle plate, and wherein jets of the treating agent are formed by said openings and directed onto the moving surface when the feeding chamber is at least partially filled with pressurised treating agent; and

actuators operatively connected to said at least one nozzle plate for moving said at least one nozzle plate at least partly outside the width of the area of the moving surface that is to be treated.

84. (new) The apparatus according to claim 83, further comprising at least one steam nozzle operatively arranged for blowing steam towards said at least one nozzle plate.

85. (new) The apparatus of claim 83, further comprising means for directing at least one needle-shaped water jet at the openings of said at least one nozzle plate.